

King County Parks **Your** **Big Backyard**

King County
Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Parks and Recreation Division



2009
Second Quarter Report
Parks Omnibus Ordinance Report
to the King County Council
January – June 2009

we're at work so you can play

Highlights of the Second Quarter

- ❖ Overall, second quarter business revenues in 2009 are lower than the same period in 2008. This decrease is due to multiple factors, including a generally poor economic climate; 2009 being an off-year for Cirque du Soleil; a later-than-usual start to the Concerts at Marymoor; the transfer of the Renton Pool to the Renton School District in the second quarter of 2008; and an agreement with the City of Enumclaw to operate the 2009 King County Fair.
- ❖ Revenue from athletic fields remained strong at Marymoor and throughout the Division's system, in particular due to two new synthetic turf, multi-use fields that opened at Marymoor and to consistent demand for fields at Preston Athletic Fields and Community Park.
- ❖ The Division continues to see increases in revenue from facility rentals at Marymoor and throughout the Division's system, due in part to facility upgrades, such as the Preston Community Center, which has made facilities more attractive, and to rental fee increases.
- ❖ During the 2008-09 school year, the Division collaborated with students from two different courses from the University of Washington (UW) to carry out park improvements in Skyway Park. One group of students restored the central wetland area, while the other designed and built a picnic shelter and plaza area adjacent to the central wetland area. These improvements, which built on ideas that arose from the community-based vision on which the Division worked with community members in 2007-08, were only possible by leveraging Community Partnership Grant (CPG) funding and creating strong partnerships with the University of Washington, the Skyway Boys and Girls Club, and the Friends of Skyway Park.

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Parks and Recreation Division 2009 Second quarter Report

Introduction

The Omnibus Parks Ordinance (Ordinance 14509), adopted November 18, 2002, by the King County Council, included this reporting requirement for the Parks and Recreation Division:

“The division shall provide a written report to the council, filed with the clerk of the council, at least four times each year, by March 15, June 15, September 15, and December 15, and more frequently as directed by the council by motion, regarding the execution of the division’s duties and responsibilities as established in K.C.C.

2.16.045.E. Following transmittal of each written report, the Division shall also make an oral presentation to the council. The written reports and oral presentations shall include, but shall not be limited to, information as to the division's efforts in:

- A. Meeting revenue targets under section 7 of this ordinance;*
- B. Implementing entrepreneurial strategies including advertising, leasing and concession agreements;*
- C. Pursuing gifts, bequests and donations, including the value and sources of gifts, bequests and donations received;*
- D. Developing agreements with other organizations to provide recreation services;*
- E. Transferring parks and recreation assets within incorporated areas or potential annexation areas to cities; and*
- F. Community outreach and involvement.”*

This is our seventh year reporting on the accomplishments of the Division. Quarterly reports were transmitted for each quarter from 2003 through 2008. The year 2009 marks the second year of the renewed Parks Levy, which was approved by voters in August 2007, with collections running from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2013.

We have structured the quarterly report to correspond to the ordinance requirements. We welcome your ideas and input. Please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Brown or Tom Koney of the King County Parks and Recreation Division at 206-296-8687 if you have any questions or suggestions.

Revenues - Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Revenues

2009 Adopted Revenues	\$28,176,067
2009 Revised Revenues	\$28,125,192
2009 Estimated Revenues ¹	\$27,537,465
2008 Actual Revenues	\$27,714,202

Second Quarter - Business Revenues Only

Levy funds, interest earnings, interfund transfers and similar revenues that are not within the control of the Division are excluded from this total.

Actual Business Revenues² (includes user fees and enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues)

January 1 – June 30, 2009	\$1,906,647
January 1 – June 30, 2008	\$2,894,904

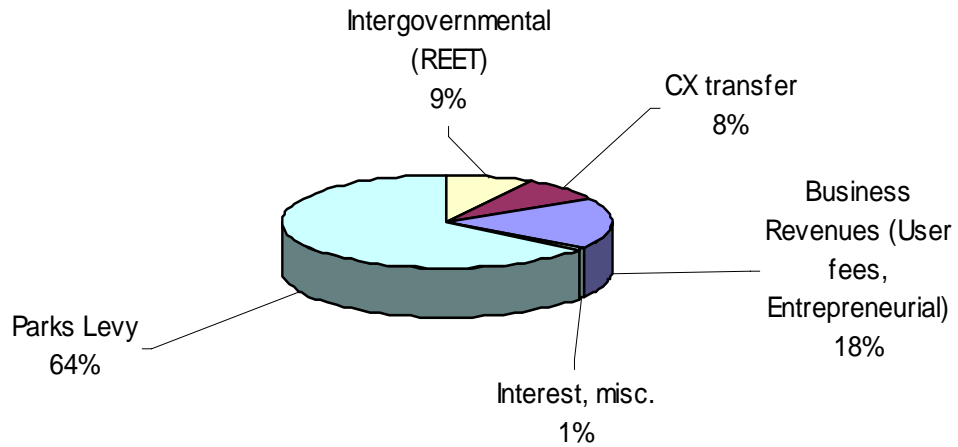
Second quarter business revenues in 2009 are lower than the same period in 2008. This decrease is due in part to the transfer of the Renton Pool to the Renton School District in the second quarter of 2008 and to an agreement with the City of Enumclaw to operate the 2009 King County Fair.

Even with a reduced asset base (due to transfer of facilities), business revenues still comprise about 18 percent of the entire Division's revenue budget (2009), which is similar to the percentage in 2002 at the beginning of the Business Plan (see charts, following page). The ensuing period has seen transfers of facilities, mostly pools, which generated more than \$2 million in revenues. This includes pool transfers in the past two years, most recently, the transfer of the Renton Pool to the Renton School District and the anticipated closure of the Evergreen Pool at the end of August 2009. The business revenue forecast for the remaining assets has risen from a total of about \$2.3 million in 2002 to nearly \$5 million in the 2009 adopted budget.

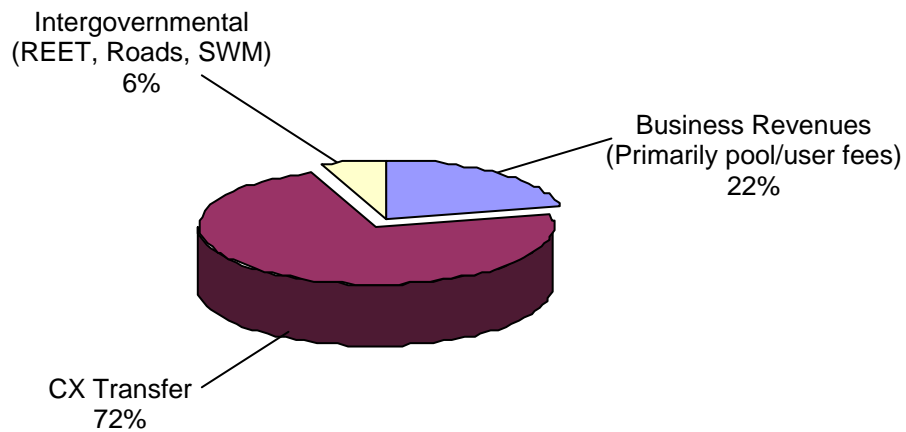
¹ Includes the City of Enumclaw operating the 2009 King County Fair and revised revenue estimates.

² Based on ARMS financial reports.

2009 Adopted Revenues - \$28M



2002 Adopted Revenues - \$26M



Expenditures – Summary

Parks and Recreation Division Expenditures

2009 Adopted Expenditures	\$27,936,171
2009 Estimated Expenditures ³	\$27,528,870
2008 Adopted Expenditures	\$27,446,665
2008 Revised Expenditures ⁴	\$27,491,310
2008 Actual Expenditures ⁵	\$24,586,573

Second Quarter 2009 – Actual Expenditures

January 1 – June 30, 2009	\$12,806,310
January 1 – June 30, 2008	\$11,006,193

For 2009, second quarter expenditures were 47 percent of the Division's annual expenditure budget. This expenditure pattern is in line with historic business trends.

As part of the newly passed levy (2008 – 2013), the Division was tasked with increasing maintenance to historic levels prior to 2002. As long as target fund balance is achieved, the Division intends to spend the maximum amount of its expenditure authority on maintaining parks, utilizing levy funds as the voters intended.

³ 2009 Estimated figure reflects the City of Enumclaw operating the 2009 King County Fair, reappropriation, 1st Quarter Omnibus Ordinance and the Lifeboat Supplemental.

⁴ Reflects reappropriation, Benson Hill Annexation and 2008 2nd Quarter Omnibus Ordinance.

⁵ 2008 Actuals based on 14th month ARMS reports.

Revenues - Implementing the Business Plan

Key Business Units

Marymoor Park



Marymoor Business Unit

	Thru 2009 Q2	Thru 2008 Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - facilities	\$48,903	\$31,122	\$17,781	57%
Rev - fields	\$383,454	\$351,233	\$32,221	9%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - parking	\$221,072	\$220,963	\$109	0%
Rev - concerts	\$6,851	\$85,157	-\$78,306	-92%
Rev - concert ticket sales	\$2,672	\$7,920	-\$5,248	-66%
Rev - Subway	\$12,063	\$11,059	\$1,004	9%
Rev - Pet Garden	\$1,900	\$2,150	-\$250	-12%
Sponsors/concessions	\$15,389	\$18,677	-\$3,288	-18%
Cirque	\$0	\$697,176	-\$697,176	-100%
Naming rights	\$0	\$115,000	-\$115,000	-100%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$692,000	\$1,540,000	-\$848,000	-55%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$1,011,000	\$961,000	\$50,000	5%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2009 Second Quarter highlights from Marymoor Park include:

- ❖ Overall, revenues at Marymoor Park are down from the same period in 2008, due to a variety of factors, including a generally poor economic climate, an off-year for Cirque du Soleil, and a later start for the Concerts at Marymoor season (only one concert happened during the second quarter 2009, compared to four concerts during the same period in 2008). Revenues from the second quarter of 2009 are slightly higher than those from the same period in 2007, the last non-Cirque year.
- ❖ Two new synthetic turf, multi-use athletic fields opened in time for the start of baseball season in April, which has helped draw steady revenue from the fields. Marymoor's synthetic turf fields require less maintenance, are virtually rain-out free, and command a higher per-hour reservation fee. Despite the higher fee, interest has remained strong in scheduling the fields, including a new regional baseball tournament which took place Memorial Day weekend.
- ❖ Revenue is up 57 percent for facility rentals, due in part to an increase in fees for facility rentals, for example, for large recurring events, such as the Evergreen Gala (a fundraising event for the Evergreen Healthcare Foundation) and Flying Wheels (a cycling event).
- ❖ Revenue from parking fees remained steady when compared to the same period in 2008. The King County Council approved an ordinance in June to allow Marymoor staff to issue infraction notices that impose a penalty for non-compliance with the \$1 parking fee, which has been in effect since 2003. Signs have been posted throughout the park advising visitors of the new penalty. Enforcement began during the third quarter of 2009 and will be discussed in future reports.
- ❖ Concert-related revenues are down from the same period in 2008, as only one concert took place during the second quarter of 2009 compared with four concerts in 2008. The first concert, which took place on June 27 and attracted some 3,500 concert-goers, featured Keb' Mo' and was part of the First Annual Seattle Rock-n-Roll Marathon. The remainder of the concerts will be reported on in future reports.

Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC)



Aquatic Center Business Unit

	Thru 2009 Q2	Thru 2008 Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - facilities	\$386,975	\$388,820	-\$1,845	0%
Rev - courses	\$84,205	\$75,514	\$8,691	12%
Rev - drop in	\$21,507	\$22,162	-\$655	-3%
Rev – Conference Ctr	\$11,470	\$14,398	-\$2,929	-20%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - Subway	\$10,024	\$9,676	\$347	4%
Rev - concessions	\$457	\$274	\$182	66%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$514,636	\$511,000	\$3,636	1%
Expenditures (rounded)*	\$1,061,790	\$1,021,000	\$40,790	4%

* Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2009 Second Quarter highlights from Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center (WKCAC) include:

- ❖ Revenues during the second quarter of 2009 remained steady compared to the same period in 2008, despite the cancellation of two annual events and a decrease in team training rentals following the 2009 fee increase. Events and team rentals make up 75 percent of the facility's revenue base.
- ❖ Revenue from swimming lessons is up 12 percent compared to last year, mainly due to the staff's continuing emphasis on improving the quality of instruction and building better relationships with the families and students they serve.
- ❖ WKCAC hosted the major national competition, the 2009 Speedo Synchronized Swimming Championships, during the second quarter and is preparing for the 2009 US Open and the 2009 Junior Nationals, which take place during the third quarter of 2009.
- ❖ Two capital projects are underway which will improve efficiency and lower operating costs of the facility. One project replaces lighting in the natatorium with more energy efficient fixtures and the other improves the facility's HVAC (Heating, Ventilating and Air Conditioning) system.

Recreation, Ballfields, and Facilities



Fields and Facilities Business Unit

	Thru 2009 Q2	Thru 2008 Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - Ballfields	\$217,272	\$203,593	\$13,679	7%
Rev - Facilities	\$76,753	\$62,763	\$13,990	22%
Non-Traditional				
Rev - RV Camping	\$13,202	\$18,211	-\$5,009	-28%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$307,227	\$285,000	\$22,227	8%

Note: Expenditure information on facilities and ballfields is tracked annually and will be discussed in the Fourth Quarter Report.

2009 Second Quarter fields and facilities highlights include:

- ❖ Revenues from fields and facilities were up from the same period of 2008 despite flood damage that led to the closure of the Tolt-MacDonald camping sites. The campsites remained closed until Memorial Day weekend, which is a later than usual start. The yurts remain popular and are reserved consistently throughout the summer.
- ❖ Facility rental revenue is up 22 percent from 2008, due to consistent demand for the recently renovated Preston Community Center.
- ❖ Revenue from athletic fields remains strong, due in large part to steady demand for the synthetic turf fields whose conversions were completed last year.

Swimming Pools



Swimming Pools Business Unit

Includes: Evergreen, Vashon and Cottage Lake Facilities

	Thru 2009 Q2	Thru 2008 Q2	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Traditional				
Rev - Pool Fees	\$137,132	\$151,957	-\$14,825	-10%
Rev - Concessions	\$373	\$72	\$301	418%
Revenues - Total (rounded)	\$137,506	\$152,000	-\$14,494	-10%
Expenditures (rounded)	\$382,474	\$373,000	\$9,474	3%

*Expenditures include only direct costs and do not include maintenance labor loaned in from other work units ("loan-in labor"). In the year-end (Fourth Quarter) report, annual expenditures will be reported along with annual revenues and compared against the cost recovery targets established in Ordinance 14509.

2009 Second Quarter swimming pool highlights include:

- ❖ Revenue from swimming pools decreased 10 percent compared to the same period in 2008, which is consistent with what other pools in the area are experiencing and can be attributed in part to the overall economic downturn.
- ❖ The outdoor pools, Vashon and Cottage Lake, opened for the 2009 summer season on June 14 and will offer open swims, swimming lessons, pool rentals, and lap swimming through the first week of September.
- ❖ Evergreen Pool's annual *"April Pools Day"* was held on April 25. Approximately 415 people attended the event, which offered 'safety stations' about topics such as boating and kayak safety, using and fitting life jackets, helping distressed swimmers, and hypothermia. Many volunteers helped organize the day's activities and gave safety demonstrations, and local businesses also supported this event with their in-kind donations.

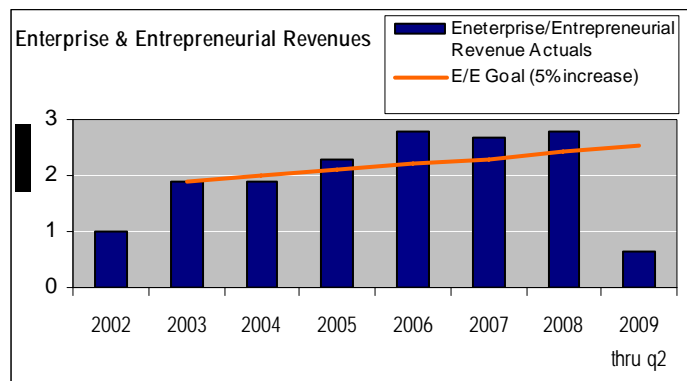
Implementing Entrepreneurial Strategies New Ways of Raising Revenues



Entrepreneurial Strategies

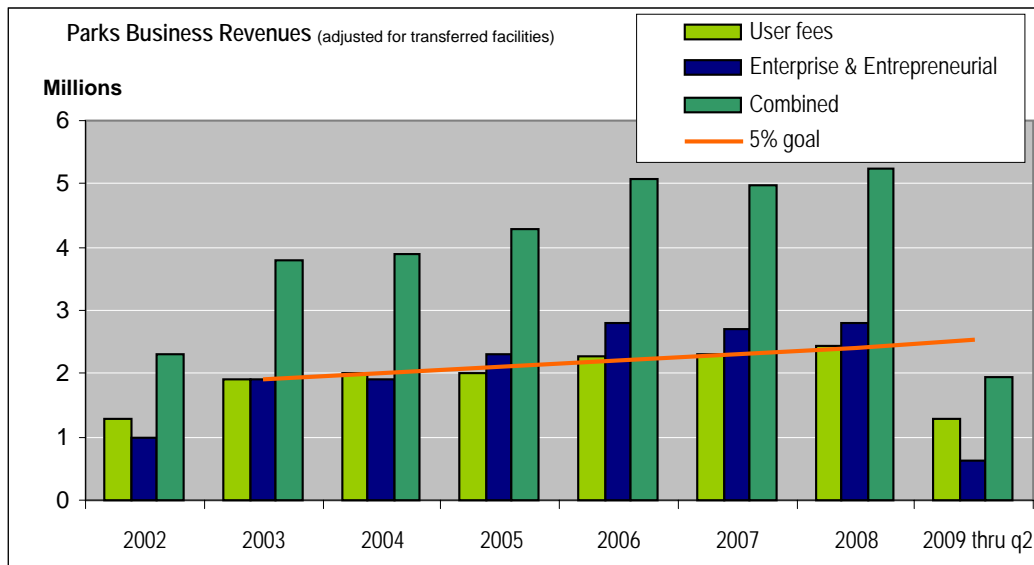
Business revenues for the second quarter of 2009 were \$1.9 million, which is down from the same period in 2008. This can largely be attributed to the generally poor economic climate, to 2009 being an off-year for Cirque du Soleil, and to a later start for the Concerts at Marymoor. In 2009, the Division is focusing on building diverse revenue streams that will lead to steady, sustainable funding in the long term.

Consistent with the vision of the Parks Business Plan, the Division has taken steps to maximize business revenues and continues to explore other actions that reduce the tax subsidy needed for the operations and maintenance of the Division's facilities. Core revenue generating activities outlined in the Parks Business Plan include maximizing revenue from the Division's existing asset base; establishing corporate sponsorships, naming rights, and other contributions; and pursuing gifts, bequests, and legacy donations.



The Division categorizes business revenues in two ways: enterprise and entrepreneurial revenues and user fee revenues. Enterprise/entrepreneurial revenues include a myriad of non-traditional activities, ranging from corporate sponsorships and other creative promotions to special facility rentals (such as the Marymoor Concert Series, Cirque du Soleil, weddings and other private events, and yurts). These are generated largely as a result of cultivation efforts and partnerships

established by the Division's staff. User fee revenues represent more traditional recreational activities, such as ballfield reservation fees, and are generated according to what the market will bear. Recent revenue increases from user fees are largely the result of capital investments, such as upgrading athletic fields to synthetic turf and renovating facilities appropriate for private, special events.



2009 Second Quarter business highlights include:

- ❖ As anticipated in the 2009 First Quarter Report, the recently completed renovation of the historic Preston Community Center has led to steady reservation of this facility for weddings and other private events, contributing to a 22 percent increase in facility rental revenues this quarter as compared with the same period in 2008.
- ❖ The Division has been laying the groundwork with potential corporate partners for creative and appropriate advertising opportunities at certain facilities, featuring themes such as healthy living, outdoor recreation, and environmentally-responsible goods and services. The outreach presentation can be found at:
http://your.kingcounty.gov/dnrp/library/parks-and-recreation/documents/partnerships/GreenImpressions_09_final.pdf
- ❖ The 2009 Concerts at Marymoor series kicked off with one concert during the second quarter, which featured Keb' Mo' on June 27 and drew 3,500 concert goers. The concert was the closing event of three days of activities related to the Seattle Rock-n-Roll Marathon.
 - The race itself, which drew 25,000 runners, took place in Seattle and Tukwila, and as the show's host, the King County Parks and Recreation Division was treated as a major event sponsor. This meant that the Division

hosted a booth at the marathon's two-day "Health and Fitness Fair", which drew 50,000 attendees. Event organizers also announced King County Parks and Recreation Division information over the loudspeakers on race day and agreed to broadcast a 30-second spot about the Division on local television channels around the time of the race.

- The 30-second spot, which featured the Division's backcountry trails, was produced in-house and will be used for many additional purposes. It is available online at <http://vimeo.com/channels/kingcountyparks>.
- ❖ Several new vendor/concession partnerships have been established, offering park visitors more options for food and beverages. The new vendors will begin operations this summer, two of which will be mobile units in Marymoor Park and two will operate inside WKCAC. These vendors pay an annual concession fee to the Division, as well as an agreed-upon percentage of their sales.

Pursuing Gifts, Bequests, and Donations



2009 Second Quarter gift and donation highlights include:

- ❖ King County Parks Legacy Fund
 - Launched in 2008, the *King County Parks Legacy Fund* continues to provide a variety of opportunities for individuals and businesses to contribute to supporting the Division's maintenance and operations.
 - The Legacy Fund brought in \$9,500 in gifts during the second quarter of 2009, which reflects a mixture of large (\$500+) and small donations.
- ❖ Grants awarded
 - The White Center Teen Program was awarded two grants in support of its Aztecs youth soccer team: One grant, from the City of Seattle for \$7,000, will support the Aztec's involvement with the team from the neighboring South Park Community Center during the 2009-2010 school year. The other grant, from Starfire Soccer Complex, provided funding for the Aztecs to participate in Starfire's spring recreation league.

Agreements with Other Organizations

Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program

The Community Partnerships and Grants (CPG) Program continues to spearhead the development of partnerships that result in new facilities and amenities in King County's parks. There are currently 34 projects in various stages of negotiation, planning, design, permitting, or construction that represent \$12 million in CPG grants and/or Capital Improvement Program commitments. By leveraging community investments (cash, grants, in-kind donations, volunteer labor, etc.), these CPG projects, when completed, will add new public recreation facilities valued at an estimated \$64 million.

Progress during the second quarter included:

- Design development and permitting continues for the Ravensdale Park synthetic turf field conversion project
- Design development and permitting began for the Dockton historical structure
- Received Redmond permit approvals for new Seattle Rowing Association (SRA) Boathouse at Marymoor
- Island Center Forest improvements nearing completion
- Paragliding parking lot expansion design underway
- CPG partner, Kent Youth Soccer Association, received \$850,000 in state funds for field turf conversion at Petrovitsky Park
- Skyway Park shelter and wetland restoration completed
- Maury Island Park design development underway
- Preliminary access completed at Tanner Landing Park, public meetings being organized



Transferring Parks and Recreation Assets

Transferring local recreation amenities to cities and focusing on rural and regional facilities has been a key element of the Parks Business Plan, and many transfers have taken place since 2002. Consistent with the Parks Business Plan, the transfer of parks and pools within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) is an on-going discussion as part of the broader County annexation strategy. Facility transfers that occurred in 2008 were listed in the 2008 Fourth Quarter Report; a complete list of those that took place prior to 2008 can be found in the 2007 Fourth Quarter Report.

Progress on facility transfers during the second quarter includes:

- Swamp Creek and Inglewood Wetlands to the City of Kenmore - completed

Facilities under consideration for transfer include:

Park	Potential Jurisdiction
132 nd Square Park	City of Kirkland
Arbor Lake	City of Burien
Big Finn Hill	City of Kirkland
Bingamon Pond	City of Federal Way
Bridle Crest Trail (portion)	City of Bellevue
Bryn Mawr	City of Renton
Boulevard Lane	City of Renton
Camelot	City of Federal Way
Cascade	City of Renton
Cecil Moses	TBD
East Norway Hill	City of Bothell
Edith Moulton	City of Kirkland
Evergreen Athletic Fields	TBD
Five Mile Lake	City of Federal Way
Green Tree	City of Kent
Hamm Creek	City of Seattle
Hazel Valley	TBD
Hilltop	TBD
Juanita Heights Park	TBD

Continued on next page

Park	Potential Jurisdiction
Kentlake Athletic Fields	City of Kent; Kent School District
Kingsgate Park	City of Kirkland
Klahanie Park	TBD
Lake Geneva	City of Federal Way
Lakewood Park	TBD
Maplewood Heights	City of Renton
Maplewood Park	City of Renton
May Creek Park	City of Renton
North Green River Park (portion)	City of Kent
North Meridian	City of Kent
North Shorewood	TBD
Park Orchard	City of Kent
Puget Sound	TBD
Renton	City of Renton
Salmon Creek	TBD
Sierra Heights / Honey Dew	City of Renton
Site #1 Duwamish	City of Tukwila
Skyway	City of Renton
South County Ballfields	City of Federal Way
Southern Heights	TBD
Sunset Playfield	City of SeaTac
White Center Pond Natural Area	TBD
White Center Heights	TBD
Windsor Vista	City of Kirkland

Community Outreach and Involvement



King County Parks Volunteer Program

The tremendous dedication of returning and new volunteers continues to enhance parks and trails throughout King County's system. During the second quarter of 2009, 2,500 volunteers provided 10,780 hours of service during 167 scheduled events and independent service projects. The projects, which covered more than 20 different sites, consisted of trail work (30 events), restoration and noxious weed removal projects (37 events), King County Greenhouse and Nursery work parties (31 events) and park maintenance and improvement projects (69 events). Although the second quarter of 2009 was marked by unusually cold, wet weather, these numbers are strong compared with volunteer participation during the second quarter of 2008.

2009 Second Quarter volunteer involvement highlights include:

- ❖ On April 20, on behalf of the thousands of volunteers who give their time to King County's parks and trails, two Parks and Trails Ambassador Volunteers accepted the King County Council Proclamation naming April as "Volunteer Appreciation Month for Volunteers in Parks". King County Council Chair Dow Constantine summarized the proclamation and praised the hard work and dedication of the volunteers.
- ❖ Earth Day was officially observed on April 22, and the entire month of April was busy with Earth Day-inspired projects, such as:
 - More than 375 Microsoft employees worked in Marymoor Park over the course of two days, restoring habitat in the preservation area and along the Sammamish River, protecting trees in the historic district, and helping in the community garden.
 - Forty Boeing employees, Cub Scouts, Girls Scouts and parents came to the Green House and Nursery to prepare 2,250 trees for use in future restoration projects.

- Other work sites included Camelot Park, Cavanaugh Pond, Gary Grant Soos Creek Park and Trail, Grand Ridge, Skyway Park, and Chinook Bend.
 - Participating partners included: Federal Way Latter-Day Saints Church, Boeing, REI, St Louis Parrish, Friends of Soos Creek, Washington Trails Association, University of Washington Restoration Ecology Network, and Friends of Skyway Park.
- ❖ The annual White Center “Spring Clean” took place on May 16, and community volunteers helped out at four parks in the neighborhood, including North Shorewood, Lakewood Park, White Center Heights, and Steve Cox Memorial Park. Tasks included weeding flower beds, removing invasive blackberries and Scot’s broom, removing litter, and painting a mural.
- ❖ Several volunteer events took place on Saturday, June 6 in celebration of National Trails Day, including:
- Youth from the White Center Teen Program worked on a trail in Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park.
 - Washington Trails Association and REI volunteers repaired three sections of trails in Grand Ridge Park.
 - More than 100 Microsoft employees worked in the conservation area of Marymoor Park, in conjunction with Seattle Works Day. They said that Marymoor Park is always the first location to fill up when they recruit for volunteer service projects.

Community Outreach and Engagement Initiatives

The King County Parks and Recreation Division has a variety of ways to reach out to, communicate with, and engage park user groups, other stakeholders, and the general public.

Electronic outreach

www.parksfeedback.com

Through *parksfeedback.com*, the Division continues to receive a variety of compliments, suggestions, feedback, and notifications, which are delivered directly to the email inboxes of Division staff. While the feedback system does not provide a statistical gauge for constituent satisfaction, it is a powerful tool that asks a series of multiple choice questions and allows users to write in comments and include their email or telephone number to receive a direct response from the Division. The notifications sent by park users through the *parksfeedback.com* tool also serve as “eyes and ears on the ground” for the Division’s 25,000 acres of property.

King County Parks e-newsletter and blog

The Division continues to send regular email newsletter to an opt-in list with more than 2,000 subscribers. The newsletter format focuses recent news, press releases, and blog posts and helps direct additional traffic to the Division's website.

In May, the Division officially launched the King County Parks blog at <http://kingcountyparks.wordpress.com/>. Through this format, the Division is able to post announcements, news, photos, videos, and other multi-media information in real time and even from the field. Readers are encouraged to submit comments, and other blogs and media outlets have referenced content in the blog, helping drive greater traffic.

King County Parks on Facebook

The Division launched a "page" on the social media website, Facebook, during the second quarter and currently has approximately 270 "fans". Similar to the blog, the Division uses this account to post multi-media information, announcements, and other news in real time. Fans can post comments and other feedback, opening an additional avenue of engagement with the Division.

King County Parks on KCNews Twitter

The Division continues to send news items to be broadcast over the general King County News Twitter account, which has 2,500 followers including media outlets, local non-profit organizations, and the general public.

Media Outreach

As part of the Division's new website structure, all pages within the website now include links to relevant press releases and earned media coverage. The list is generated automatically and is refreshed as new articles are published, contributing dynamic, up-to-date content.

King County Parks' Press Releases

During the second quarter of 2009, the Division, through the efforts of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks Public Affairs Section, released 26 press releases covering everything from summer event announcements, new partnerships, and ways to support the Division to volunteer opportunities and other news.

Other outreach initiatives from the second quarter of 2009

- ❖ In partnership with Friends of Marymoor Park and Redmond Town Center, the Division updated and printed a new Marymoor Park map, the first update in nearly a decade. The map is colorful and engaging and highlights the park's top attractions, such as the off-leash dog area, the recreation and event area, the historic district and the Audubon Birdloop Trail. The map, which was printed on recycled paper from a 50 percent wind-powered factory, is also available online on the Division's website.

- ❖ Division staff worked with the Marymoor Community Gardeners Association to expand the garden in response to increasing demand for p-patch plots. Division staff re-located and re-built compost bins and cleared areas adjacent to the garden, with 30 Boeing volunteers helping to spread soil and compost in new plots.
- ❖ During the 2008-09 school year, the Division collaborated with students from two different courses from the University of Washington (UW) to carry out park improvements in Skyway Park, leveraging CPG funding and building on ideas that arose from the Community-Based Vision on which the Division worked with community members in 2007-08.
 - A team of students from the UW Restoration Ecology Network (UW REN) course planned and implemented a wetland improvement project over the course of the entire school year. They also provided a stewardship report to the Division and the Friends of Skyway Park, outlining habitat improvement tasks for the Friends of group or other volunteers to carry out in the coming years.
 - Starting in April, the Design-Build course from the UW School of Landscape Architecture launched a project to design and construct a picnic shelter and plaza area adjacent to the recently restored wetland, complementing and highlighting its natural features. Despite many design and budget challenges, the resourceful students created a wonderful amenity for the park that includes a shelter with a vegetated roof, interpretive signage, a boardwalk, native landscaping, and other features.



Skyway Park

Both projects wrapped up at the end of the UW school year in mid-June, and the grand opening (pictured above) took place on June 12.